



Simpler: The Future of Government

By Cass R. Sunstein

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Governments everywhere are undergoing a quiet and profound revolution: they're getting simpler, more cost-effective, and focused on improved outcomes not politics. For four years one of the leading lights of that revolution, Cass Sunstein, as President Obama's "Regulatory Czar," oversaw the brilliant and successful effort to give every American better government. In "a remarkably fun, engaging read" (Fortune.com), he explains how, why, and what should come next.

For Americans, the future of government arrived in 2009. Government became simpler, it became smarter. It worked better. Cass Sunstein, America's "regulatory czar" under President Barack Obama, was at the center of it all. Drawing on state-of-the-art work in behavioral psychology and economics, Sunstein helped save the country more than \$91 billion and an unknown number of lives. This was accomplished through the extraordinary power of nudges—seemingly modest policies that preserve freedom of choice, better lives, and fundamentally improve government. In combination with cost-benefit analysis, nudges are already saving money, saving lives, and improving, by simplifying, government. In *Simpler*, Sunstein speaks for the first time about what he encountered and accomplished in the Obama Administration and what the lessons are for everyone going forward.

We don't need big government or small government; we need better government. *Simpler* is a "lucid, engaging treatment of behavioral economics that sees a role for the state in nudging humans towards rationality and responsibility. The result is a forthright, compelling vision of technocratic government that's both efficient and humane" (*Publishers Weekly*, starred review). And it just may be "the most important book to come out of President Obama's first term" (Walter Isaacson).

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Editorial Review

Review

"Tucked away from the sound and fury of politics, there is the quiet world of policy making. This fantastic book, from a magnificent scholar turned a master of this world, restored my faith in what governments really do, and more importantly in what a smart government could do to help citizens live better, more fulfilled lives."--Dr. Esther Duflo, professor at MIT and author of "Poor Economics"

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"A remarkably fun, engaging read."

"This inspiring book has a tale and a lesson. In the tale, a thinker with a passion for reason moves from the ivory tower to the White House and becomes a doer. The lesson is that regulation is not a dirty word and that thoughtful government works."--Daniel Kahneman, bestselling author of Thinking, Fast and Slow

"Everyone complains that government regulations are often dumb, but how could you make them smarter? Here's a guidebook by someone who did it. It should be read by everyone who sets policies for government, nonprofits, education, or business."--Chip Heath, co-author of Decisive: How to Make Better Decisions in Life and Work

"We typically don't associate the idea of simple systems with government and large corporations. But in this fine book, Sunstein provides a glimpse into how we can tame the complexity beast and why it is important, even necessary if we want to improve our collective welfare."--Dan Ariely, bestselling author of Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces that Shape our Decisions

"Sunstein's firsthand knowledge and distinct humor give his account a real dynamism."--Kirkus Reviews

"Sunstein's firsthand knowledge and distinct humor give his account a real dynamism."--Kirkus Reviews

"This may be the most important book to come out of President Obama's first term. Contrary to conservative perception, the administration, guided by Cass Sunstein, launched a brilliant effort to simplify and reduce regulations. Sunstein found ingenious ways to protect citizens and nudge corporate behavior while maximizing freedom and business opportunity. Simpler is a fascinating guide to how behavioral economics is improving government, and none too soon."--Walter Isaacson, bestselling author of Steve Jobs

"Tucked away from the sound and fury of politics, there is the quiet world of policy making. This fantastic book, from a magnificent scholar turned a master of this world, restored my faith in what governments really do, and more importantly in what a smart government could do to help citizens live better, more fulfilled lives."--Dr. Esther Duflo, Professor of Poverty Alleviation and Development Analysis at Massachusetts Institute of Economics and Co-Founder and Director of the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab

"Cass Sunstein: scholar, public servant, choice architect. This lays out a new vision for how research from academics and attention from the public can be used to make regulations and government work better and simpler--to protect the public at the lowest possible cost and hassle. No wonder Glenn Beck said Sunstein

was the most dangerous man in America."--Dr. Austan Goolsbee, University of Chicago Booth School of Business and former Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers

"Federal regulations determine the quality of the air we breathe and water we drink, the safety of our workplaces, the kinds of cars we can buy, and much more. In this book, Cass Sunstein shows how he helped President Obama use the smartest academic ideas to undertake the most important reform of our regulatory system in more than three decades. This revolution in regulation relies on using evidence, rather than ideology, to guide regulatory decisions and by making regulations simpler and easier to understand. Simple is a must (and fun) read for anyone who wants a deeper understanding of how government--and the people in it--are using the insights from the seminal research by Sunstein and others to make our lives healthier, safer, and more prosperous."--Michael Greenstone, 3M Professor of Environmental Economics at MIT, Department of Economics

About the Author

Cass R. Sunstein is the nation's most-cited legal scholar who, for the past fifteen years, also has been at the forefront of behavioral economics. From 2009 to 2012, he served as the administrator of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. He is the Robert Walmsley University Professor at Harvard Law School. His book, *Nudge*, coauthored with Richard Thaler, was a national bestseller.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Marian Sheffield:

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